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April 27, 1999      LB 878

Appropriations Committee. Bill was advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments pending, Mr. President. (AM1216, Legislative Journal page 1628.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Wehrbein,...

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Mister...

SENATOR CUDABACK: ...you're recognized to open on LB 878.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: ...Mr. President, members of the body, this I will call your attention to, starting on page 60, is the capital construction. It goes through there, reaffirmations on the 960-bed unit at Tecumseh. Page 61 is some new money that I think you may be interested, NETC, Nebraska Educational Television, a transponder replacement and...a conversion to digital signal. That is our chief expense. And if you look over across on page 62, the grand total of that is \$62 million. We have an annual cost of \$6 million for 10 years to fund that and in this budget we have 12...\$6 million each year or \$12 million. The \$44 million is needed for the transponder capacity replacement and the first priority for digital TV conversion which is, I said, to be financed over 10 years. If you follow that, we have to convert to digital TV by 2006, if my memory's correct. This gets...we have broad use of any TV across the state. We feel it's Nebraska's obligation to move along with that. The transponder we have is due to go dark in December, and so this gives us two new transponders that will take us into the next century and gives us adequate money for going digital TV. The other one is the College of Education building at University of Nebraska at Kearney. There's \$4.7 million each year for the College of Education building at Kearney. This is on the Coordinating Commission's priority list and it replaces eight buildings that are now being used at Kearney for education. In the Peru State College construction you'll see that we have some of that money in there, but we allocated \$117,000 and that will be dependent upon some performance by Peru and Peru Foundation and the communities to move forward with the plan and also the Peru State College to move forward with the plan, to provide us with a master plan. And we will look at the Hoyt Science Hall project in...forgot the date, December, December, what is it, November, subject to